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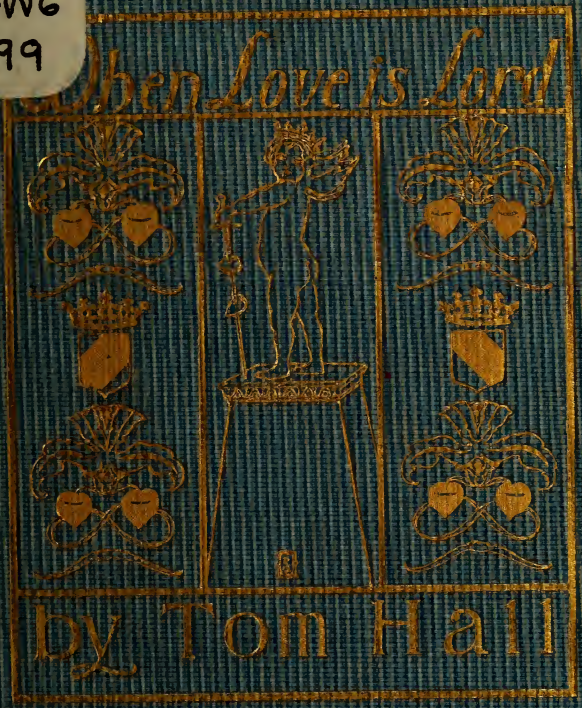

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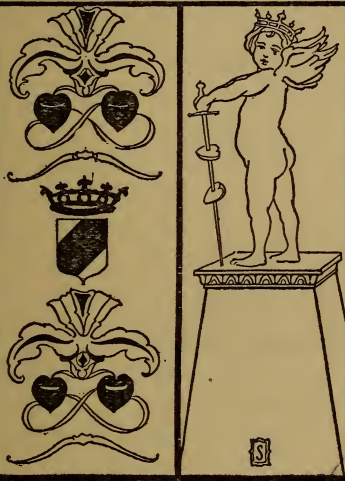

by Tom Hall

Author of "When Hearts are Trumps," etc.

New York
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To them he expresses his thanks—especially to the editors of "Munsey's Magazine," "Truth," "Ainslee's Magazine," "The Criterion," and "The New York Ledger."

T. H.

New York, March 23d, 1899.

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Take Care.

LOVE is a gambler,
Watch him with care,
The roistering rambler
Will anything dare.

He'll play with a beggar,
He'll sport with a king;
A fortune he'll wager,
Gold — fame — anything.

Watch the cards — cease your chiding,
He's false — you'll believe
When I tell you he's hiding
The hearts up his sleeve!

On Christmas Day.

ON Christmas Day a maid and I
Were walking very slow
From church, and all the grayish sky
Was filled with falling snow.

I hoisted an umbrella up
To guard her from the storm;
Half filled with happiness my cup,
My heart with love was warm.

"Dear me," I sighed, "here is a go,
There's not a soul in sight,
If I but had some mistletoe
My heart indeed were light.

"Unfortunate am I, though big,
A most unlucky fellow."
"Why, dear," she cried, "I tied a sprig
On top of the umbrella."

Snared.

WHEN first I met sweet Nell,
My lad,
When first I met sweet Nell—
My friend he warned: "There danger lies,
Right in her sparkling, roguish eyes,
And you must heed it well."

I laughed at his alarms,
My lad,
I laughed at his alarms.
I made my bow and smiled at ease—
Pretended she was hard to please
For one who had few charms.

But now my grievous plight,
My lad,
But now my grievous plight
The situation alters. Lo!
She laughs to see me suffer so
And I sleep not at night.

For "nay" she will not say,
My lad,
And "yea" she will not say;
All day I grovel at her feet,
And swear that e'en her taunts are sweet,
And cannot go away.

The Right Way.

O WOULD ye win a woman's heart
To keep in your possession?
Go practice ye the soldier's art —
His glorious profession!

O, would ye in her bosom place
That wondrous "fellow feeling"?
Go march to her with a "right face,"
And aim at her while kneeling!

After Vacation.

O SWEET Summer Girl,
My poor heart's in a whirl,
I'm engaged to six hundred and forty of you.
And now every day
My respects I must pay
To each in a love laden letter or two.

The scheme has been played
Of a typewriter maid
To attend to this sort of thing, — see it is done.
But if I try that pass,
I'm afraid that the lass
Will but swell out the number to six forty-one.

The Clock Speaks.

"OH dear, oh dear, I've seen a sight
That gave me such a shock,
When Harry Plume called here last night."
(The speaker was a clock.)

"He held our Fanny in his lap,
And kissed her when he pleased;
And how the impudent young chap
Our dear Miss Fanny squeezed!

"He told her she was his for life
And could not get away.
He said she'd be his little wife
Forever and a day.

"He held her hands and kissed them. Whew!
Three hours I ticked in vain,
Until he grabbed my own hands, too,
And turned them back again."

Which?

IN a letter he wrote from the city
He called her a "pretty young girl."
He's a fellow that's awfully witty,
And he keeps all the girls in a whirl.

Now a compliment meant he or pity?
Should she kiss him or wish he were hung?
Was the accent he meant on the "pretty"?
Or was it to be on the "young"?

Her Triumph.

SHE sat like a queen looking down at them all —
While seven gallants bent before her —
For she was a débutante at her first ball,
And the seven were there to adore her.
The tributes they whispered were long and sincere,
She breathed the faint perfume of roses,
And there floated those strains, softly sweet to her ear,
That no one but Chopin composes.
No wonder she blushed! 'Twas a triumph indeed!
The seven gallants all proclaimed it;
And even her rivals were bound to concede
That the poor word "success" but misnamed it.

No wonder she blushed! For a blush she had need;
'Twas not pride in her triumph that drew it.
She sat there a slave to ambition and greed —
A chattel, *for sale*, and she knew it.

Between the Dances.

BETWEEN the minuet and waltz
It all occurred. I took my chances.
My rashness is my worst of faults.
I fell a victim to her glances.

She massed her forces on my right —
A baby moon the scene enhances,
A garden sleeping in the night.
(We'd strolled away from the Miss Nancys.)

A stealthy sigh was her vidette.
With one stray curl she made a charge.
The summons to the minuet
Was signal for attack at large.

Her dainty lips my strength defied.
I charged her breastworks bolder when,
She captured both my arms — and cried
A little on my shoulder then.

A happy prisoner am I,
Captivity like mine entrances.
Release nor ransom would I buy.
It all occurred between the dances.

Christmas Song.

NOW sing ye a song of the pipe and the bowl,
Ri fol de rol la!
King Christmas is with us, the jolly old soul,
Ri fol de rol la!
The wife in her chamber, the maid in her kitchen,
The children, quite sure of one day without switchin',
And grandfather, too, with his rosy old poll,
Sing, Tu ral I u ral, Ri fol de rol la!

Sing Hail to the Holly, sing Ho Mistletoe!
Ri fol de rol la!
Sweet Mary's forgiven her ranting young beau,
Ri fol de rol la!

And all through the house is the sound of
their kissing.
There's never a minute or second they're
missing,
And Mary's as red as a rosebud, O Ho!
Sing, Tu ral I u ral, Ri fol de rol la!

Unkissed on Christmas.

SHE stood beneath the mistletoe,
And twenty men were near;
She sighed and murmured gently, "Oh,"
And not a man would hear.

She was a maiden, too, — but then
The oldest one alive.
While these were somewhat youthful men,
She was quite forty-five.

I led her hence and told her
A secret of such blisses.
(Oh, I am growing bolder)
"Age sweetens wine — not kisses."

A Difference.

WHAT ho! Look out there! Clear the road!
With tinkling bells, steeds neighing
(They never drew a happier load),
Dan Cupid's with us sleighing.

On guard, my sweet! I saw a blush
Your secret thoughts betraying.
But let them know. Who cares a rush?
Yes, Cupid's with us slaying.

The Coming of Spring.

THE other day
Spring passed this way
With laughing lips and eyes.
She scattered flowers
For hours and hours
And painted blue the skies.

With brush unseen
She painted green
The meadow and the hill.
In each bird's throat
She put a note —
A love exultant thrill.

She painted red
Maid's cheeks, 'tis said,
Set their young blood a-jumping;
And as for me,
Just look and see,
And hear my heart a-thumping.

The Country Girl.

THERE was a girl in our town,
And she was wondrous wise.
Her golden hair was hanging down
Her back, as you surmise.

In love the maiden chanced to fall —
We all thought it a pity —
With a rich young fellow, straight and tall,
Who lived down in the city.

The rich young fellow was a brute;
He never thought of marriage:
But she won her breach of promise suit,
And now rides in a carriage.

Cupid out of Practice.

YOUNG Cupid caught them on the beach;
The moon was full and mellow,
And she was pretty as a peach —
A love-sick youth, the fellow.

"Ho, ho;" said Cupid, "work to do!
I'm sadly out of practice.
The moonlight makes it harder, too.
I'm getting old, the fact is."

He fired an arrow; it went wide,
And pierced two little fishes,
And they were married at high tide
With all their friends' best wishes.

He wedded a lobster to a whale,
A sculpin to a flounder;
A bachelor bluefish, nose to tail,
He pierced a sixty pounder.

"Four times I've fired. Great suffering
Scott!"
He cried in consternation:
"If I get on like this, Lord wot,
I'll marry off creation.

"Four times I've fired; I've lost my art.
Four times I've fired and missed her,
I'll try once more." He hit her heart,
And then the fellow kissed her.

Hearts.

"GIVE me your heart, my pretty maid,"
I said with gentle passion;
For to steal the heart of a winsome maid
Is now quite out of fashion.

"Kind sir," quoth she, "I give it you,
Not even asking mother,
And here's another one. That's two,—
Another and another!"

And she kept on to my chagrin
With spots, ace, Jack, King, Queen.
Hearts was our game; she played to win,
And gave me all thirteen.

My Valentine.

MY valentine? Ah let me see,
My valentine to her!
A thing of beauty it should be
To make her pulses stir.

And it should tell her of my love
As strong as flooding tide;
As steadfast as the stars above,
Yet something she can hide.

And it must be a thing of worth,
And yet not cost too much——
With money, since my hour of birth,
I've seldom been in touch.

I have it, yes, I'll send it in
Parenthesis like this ( ).
I'll save my little store of tin
And send my love a kiss.

The Making of the Song.

THE LADY.

SIR poet, sir poet, come write me a lay,
That the world will go singing a year and a day.
Come write me a song of a heart that is broken,
Of love that is ocean deep, still never spoken;
Of a maiden a sighing alone and in tears,
And a brave youth a dying, unconscious of fears.

THE POET.

Fair lady, thy servitor strikes not his lyre
Save when it is tempered by love's fiercest fire;
And the chords of his lyric must e'er be attuned
To the woe of his heart, to the pain of his wound.

The fair lady sighed, and the poet deplored.
The fair lady cried, and the poet felt bored.
The lady then laughed, and the bard gave a start,
While Cupid a shaft drove straight through his hard heart.
The fair lady mocked at the poet's sad plight—
And the song strains all flocked to the poet that night.

A Melancholy Reflection.

YOUNG maids they are so very dear —
The very dearest creatures,
With eyes so innocent and clear
And dainty, dimpled features.

Our lives they bless; our hearts they cheer;
We nothing can deny them;
But still it's sad when they're so dear
To think we have to buy them.

Love's Arrow.

WHEN Love his arrow speeds to us
It wounds without a pain.
We simply thank the little cuss,
And bid him shoot again.

We are the happiest of men,
And gaily go about;
But, oh, the awful anguish when
We draw that arrow out!

A Correction.

"A RAG and a bone and a hank of hair."
That is Woman, according to Kipling.
(Jove! What won't an Englishman dare?)
But don't believe the talented stripling.

A mouthful of honey, star eyes a pair,
Cheeks made of roses and lips running wine,
All wrapped up in satin and labeled "With care,"
That is the make-up of Woman divine.

And just peeping out from each velvety shoulder
Two little wings not yet ready to fly,
That when they are stronger, and older and bolder
Will help us poor men to our home in the sky.

Her Wish.

I DO not want a noble Duke—
Unless it is a mighty right,
That by strong blow and not by fluke
Can win a fortune in a fight.

I want to wed no Baron land,
Or finical and fussy Marquis,
Who's as devoid of gold as sand,
And has complexion of a darky.

No Prince, unless he prints to sell,
Some paper to a good amount.
In fact my secret here I tell,
I'd like to wed a bank a' Count.

In Trouble.

I'M in love with a curl,
With a blush, with a pout.
I'm in love with a girl.
Shall I ever get out?

Yes, I'm sentenced for life.
Shall I ever get out?
Yes, I've taken a wife.
Don't know what I'm about.

And she's locked all the doors,
Women's rights now to spout
To her friends (they're all bores).
Shall I ever get out?

His Awful Fate.

THE youth stood on the ballroom floor
Whence all but him had fled.
('Twas a summer hotel, and the other four
Young men had gone to bed.)

Three hundred girls sat side by side,
With hop cards in their hands;
And each one hoped to be his bride
Ere the frost was on the sands.

"The youth, oh, where is he?" we cried,
As we sipped morn's perfumed breath.
With a tear in his eye the clerk replied:
"That youth was danced to death."

Just a Parody.

BY THE SUMMER GIRL.

BREAK! break! break!
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
But, oh, for the presence of just one man
To come and make love to me!

Oh, well for the fisher maid,
As she sings with her brother at play,
But I am so envious of the jade
I could see her in Botany Bay.

And well for every one,
For every one but me.
Oh, to be anywhere under the sun
Except by the tiresome sea!

Break! break! break!
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
I'd give my fortune for just one man
To come and make love to me.

Locations.

SHE dared my lips to try it.
I kissed her on the sly.
I kissed her on the quiet.
I kissed her on the eye.

I kissed her on the shoulder.
I kissed her finger tips.
And then as love grew bolder
I kissed her on the lips.

I kissed her East and West.
I kissed her North and South.
But the place I love to kiss her best
Is on her pretty mouth.

Love in Court.

TO Cupid's court she took the case,
A plain tiff was the trouble.
She'd fallen out with Charley Chase,
And in with Bow and Bubble.

Now Cupid sat in gown and wig
With little Puck assisting,
While Bow and Bubble, small and big,
As lawyers, did the twisting.

"What is your age?" asked little Puck.
"Dam — age, sir, is the question,"
Roared Bow. Said Puck, "We'll be in luck
If you'll avoid suggestion."

"'Tis breach of promise," loudly cries
Old Bubble. He o'erreaches;
For Cupid smilingly replies,
"*I* know Love has no breeches."

Such were the points of every sort,
The lawyers fought like fury,
Until the case went out of court
With a divided jury.

The bold defendant laughed aloud,
The plaintiff wept most timely;
Then Puck called "Order!" to the crowd,
And spoke these words sublimely:

"That damages they'd not agree
To give," said Puck, "'s infamous;
And therefore we'll be blest if we
Don't give you a man-dam-us."

Maid of Gotham.

MAID OF GOTHAM — and my heart —
Give, oh, give me back a part
Of the cash you deftly took
From my leather pocketbook.
I am busted. Have a care.

This line represents a swear.

I am a New Jersey lad.
'Tis the first time I've been bad.
Bowery beer, my purse and thou
Were more than happiness enow.
All I want is ferry fare.

Again a sad inverted swear.

Maid of Gotham, I am broke.
Oh, I was a silly bloke.
I would fly to Jersey City.
Think of me this once with pity.
If you won't, why, then, beware!

For this line, too, records a swear.

My Cutter.

"I'VE bought a new cutter,"
I told every girl.
They all went in a flutter
To see which I'd whirl

Through the downy, white snow,
Sitting sweet at my side;
For the "first" one you know,
They picked out for my bride.

I bought a new cutter,
As I am alive,
But never a girl
Did I take out to drive;

For this, my new cutter,
Was merely a knife.
And now they all cut *me*.
I'll ne'er find a wife.

One Fond Kiss.

ONE fond kiss, and then we sever,
One farewell, alas, forever!
We've engaged been all the summer —
Our flirtation's been a hummer.

But at length the season's over,
And we both fly back to cover.
O'er the precipice of parting
Now you drop me as we're starting.

Had I never loved so kindly,
I had never loved so blindly,
Never met you, little witch-er, —
Why I'd be one ring the richer!

A Parody.

DEDICATED TO THE SUMMER GIRL.

GATHER ye sweethearts while ye may,
Old Time is still a flying;
And this same lad who loves to-day
Afar may soon be hying.

The glorious orb of night, the moon,
Will lend his aid unto you.
Summer is short — its end comes soon;
Coquette not — let them woo you.

'Tis better twenty rings to wear,
That mean each one a wedding,
Than have the gray threads tinge your hair
While maiden walks you're treading.

The Straw Ride.

NOW hitch up your horses, though weather be raw,
Now get the old sleigh out and fill it with straw,
Now pack in the girls and the boys side by side.
Crack! crack! we are off for a jolly straw ride.

Now we trot down the street, now we pass the hills by,
Now comes the dark wood where the girls will be shy.
Squeeze them tight (for it's cold) till they're laughing and red.
Kiss them quickly — or some one will get there ahead.

Now over the river, now under the arch,
Now turn to the right at the skeleton larch,
Now down through the dale where the flow'rs
grow in June;
And home by the light of the young crescent
moon.

A Thanksgiving Dream.

I DREAM of my love
With her laughing blue eyes.
And I dreamt that her glove
Was a cavalier's prize.

I dreamt that I won it
In tourney and fight.
And when I had done it
She smiled with delight.

So I cried, "None shall tame me,"
And "For you I die."
And now who can blame me
For eating mince pie?

They Were Seven.

I MET a pretty summer girl—
Eighteen years old, she said;
She seemed to be quite in the whirl,
A very thoroughbred.

"Have you a fiancé, sweet maid?"
I asked with courtesy.
"A fiancé? I've seven," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"Two of them in Chicago lie
(In Rome as Romans doing)
And in New York two others try
My patience with their wooing.

"And one in Boston writes each day
To keep me true—ha, ha!
The other two, they simply stay
In Philadelphia.

"Now add them up," she said, "and you
Will find the number seven."
"Nay, five!" said I. "Don't count the two
Who are in that Quaker Heaven.

"You see there are but five," said I,
"Alive and out of Heaven."
Quick was the summer girl's reply:
"Oh, mister, they are seven."

"But those in Philadelphia
Are dead — their sins forgiven —
Like all else in that town." But still
The summer girl would have her will,
And said, "Nay, they are seven."

Perfectly Safe.

WE shall go no more a roving,
Maiden mine.
Ah, no more of moonlight loving,
Dear, divine.
Now the winter has set in,
And the chair that we *sit* in
Is not easy to get in —
Which is fine.

Winter blusters round without.
Dainty dear.
Papa blusters all about.
Never fear.
To such things I am inured
By the past I have endured.
And I've had my life insured,
In his company.

A Proper Girl.

SHE was a maid, so very shy!
The very modestest of lasses!
She would not gaze with naked eye,
But ever used sedate eyeglasses.

The straight and narrow path she walked,
Her soul was white as budding callas;
When she recited Poe she talked
About the "Pallid break of Pallas."

I begged a kiss. She bade me wait —
While thus intent she bade me linger —
Till she could take her place sedate,
"Beneath a spray of mistle-finger."

A Woman's Way.

ONE day a pretty maid I met,
And she had lost her way.
With tears her tender eyes were wet;
"Ah, me!" was all she'd say.

So I got down upon my knees
To aid the pretty lass
To find her way, though not with ease,
By seeking in the grass.

To her my purpose I explained,
And she began to laugh;
And in a style that greatly pained
She railed at me with chaff.

"Get up, you fool," remarked the maid.
I hasted to obey,
Remarking as I faced the jade,
"*Now* you have got your way."

A Beauty.

SHE is a beauty — that is all,
The princess, empress of the ball.
She is the wonder of the town,
With sparkling gems and silken gown.
Erect, supreme, a dream, a queen;
The sight one tells of having seen;
A perfect rose, a lily tall —
She is a beauty — that is all.

She is a beauty — that is all.
Reigning in dance or opera stall.
With all the soul, say, of the rose
Or stately lily-bud — God knows.
With all the heart of sparkling gem,
Mere fitting for a diadem.
Though men flock at your faintest call,
You are a beauty — that is all.

An Impossibility.

ALACKADAY! He wants my heart,
My handsome, wayward Willie.
An' he not get it, we must part
Forever. O, how silly!

Alas! I know not that he'll live
A righteous man and steady;
But, dearie me, I cannot give
A heart he has already.

In Love.

MY heart has took a photygraph —
I couldn't wish a better —
That makes me want to jump and laugh,
And try to write a letter.

But that I can't. I don't know how.
I'm but a son of labor.
Nor have I got the nerve to bow —
And she's my next door neighbor.

I dare not speak — but do not think
My speaking so could harm her;
For she's a regular springtime pink,
And I am but a farmer.

I fear I'll never make her know
I love her well and truly;
But I'm just going to love her so —
It makes me feel so bully.

The Examination of the Co-ed.

THE sweet girl graduate arose
On oral examination.
The old professor blew his nose
And smiled with approbation.
"Tell me the author of the line,
'Where the stagnant torrents flow'?"
Said he. The maid blushed red as wine
And answered, "O, I don't know!"

"You studied it in rhetoric,"
The old professor said.
"Now see if you can't remember quick.
It must be in your head.
Now are you thinking? Tell me, Miss."
She answered with a wink,
And a pursing of lips that were fit to kiss,
"Why, sir, yes — I don't think."

" You fill my soul with keenest pain
And your ignorance distresses."
And the old professor tried again:
"Who wrote the 'Rejected Addresses'?"
To silence followed a tittering stir
At the prompt response of the lass:
" According to my experience, sir,
Most all the boys in the class."

At the Carmelites.

WE talked it over moonlight nights,
In shadows of the Carmelites,
Where she, Therèse, was one who'd pray
Unceasingly by night and day;
And I was one of those blasé
Young men who lingered by the way
Because that her black hood within
There was a face as fair as sin —
Where she would try to turn my thought
To things that I should do, and ought —
Where she would lead my soul above,
And I would drag it down — to love.

A month I lodged there with the saints,
And laughed at anxious Ninette's plaints
From Paris. And when all was done,
Therèse had my poor heart, I — nun.

Thine and Mine.

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
They may be full of bàcilli;
Or with the deadly microbe laden
To send me to the sky.

All this I'm told by Doctor Pillem,
But do not go away.
The cigarettes that I smoke kill 'em,
So *you* may safely stay.

Just Suited.

WHEN you have me and I have you
In bonds of matrimony,
The skies above will all be blue,
The dish before us honey.

Let foolish wise men sneer and scoff,
We're sure to be contented.
'Twere meet that they their hats should doff
And greet love unlamented.

We are the couple, all agree,
Just suited to each other;
For you have gold to dam the sea,
And haven't any mother.

Buy Low Baby.

WHEN you dress up in black or brown,
Buy low, baby, buy —
To go a shopping in the town,
Buy low, baby, buy —
Remember I'm not made of gold,
And buy not all things that are sold;
And lest you want to hear me scold
Buy low, baby, buy.

Oh, lest you'd see me nightly weep,
Buy low, baby, buy.
Yes, buy things only that are cheap.
Buy low, baby, buy.
And if you'd please me once for all,
Why, then, buy nothing new at all,
But wait until some time next fall,
Buy low, baby, buy.

She Gave Me Away.

I TOLD my bride about the cake
My darling mother used to make;
And then with sighs and many a pout
My poor wife went the house about.

I told her of the bread I ate
When I was aged some six or eight,
And of the cookies sweet and round
That in the jar I always found.

Alas, my mother came to stay
A week with us the other day;
She gave our kitchen just one look,
And sighed, "How I wish *I* could cook!"

My Fate is Sealed.

NOW my financial fate is sealed,
In dainty sealing wax.
Unto my wife have been revealed
Some *real cheap* sealskin sacques.

She ordered one. The bill came back.
Ye gods, such double dealing,—
(I'd like to give my wife the sack,) —
'Tis higher than the ceiling.

To me that bill's a mere skin game,
A game devoid of feeling.
I must repudiate the same,
Or must resort to stealing.

My Superior Fraction.

YOU did not think when we were wed,
That all your sweet domestic capers
Would be worked up and edited
And published in the "funny" papers.

You did not think I'd win the bread
You bake by writing of the baking;
And note the queer thoughts in your head,
And claim them as of my own making.

Oh, Reading Public, old and young,
To-night I make you my confessor.
My quiet wife, unknown, unsung,
Is more than half of me, God bless her!

The Wife.

HER beauty wondering men of wealth
In guarded whispers told,
And gazed upon her as by stealth —
One ring she wore — plain gold.

The merchant prince, the millionaire,
None dared be overbold;
For though the sun lived in her hair,
One ring she wore — plain gold.

The warrior bowed, the courtier smiled,
In vain the wit cajoled;
In innocence she was a child —
One ring she wore — plain gold.

The Artist, Time.

TIME, the artist, painted my wife;
Painted her gray and weak of limb;
Painted her old and tired of life,
Till I chuckled and laughed and roared at him.

For she has the beauty of flower and star,
With the rose on her cheek and the star in her eye –
Only she's far more beautiful, far,
Than the roses of earth or the stars of the sky.

But Time kept on with his crayon and brush,
And he clad her in black, in a widow's gown,
With a faint sad smile that would bring a hush
In the noisiest meeting of men in town.

She was gazing afar, with an upturned face,
In her hand a locket, a portrait of me;
And, lo, in her eyes I saw the grace
Of a woman whose love reached eternity!

Oh, quickly I grasped the hand of Time,
Whose pulse-beats measure the years of life,
And cried — and the words came forth in rhyme,
"It is my wife — it is my wife!"

But One.

WHEN Love was laughing in my heart,
I thought all women true.
I judged them coupled and apart,
And I knew more than few.

When sorrow shadowed my poor soul,
I saw the wrong I'd done;
For only one of all the whole
Stood true — aye, only one?

Her Boys.

WITH tangled hair and dirty hands,
On his mouth, ah, many a crumb,
He slowly comes to my knee and stands,
Saying, "I wish mamma'd come."

My boy, my joy, my prince, my king,
I clasp him hard with delight;
And I'd die to tell him that one small thing,
That "Mamma would come to-night."

"Long she's been gone," is all that he knows,
"On a journey up to the stars"—
When the clouds a falling star disclose.
"She's coming," he cries, "see the cars."

Is he the child, or am I the child?
"We both are," I cry as I write,
For though I know all, like a child, I'm wild,
Wishing "Mamma would come to-
night."

Gettin' Afraid of God.

'TWAS the silent hour of twilight in our
home upon the hill,
And I sat half lost in wonder at some work
of Nature's will;
For below me, in the valley, two black storm
clouds were at war,
And I felt for just a moment like some Ro-
man emperor
Who, to ease his mind from all the madden-
ing worry of the day,
Had called his slaves to kill themselves —
and drive his cares away.
But the lightning's flash seemed different to
a rosy little chap,
My boy, who, worried out with play, was
cuddled in my lap;
Who said, and snuggled closer, with a sleepy
little nod:

" Pop, I'm twyin to be a good boy, but I'm
gettin' afraid of God."
And my own man's heart contracted with his
pang of human pain,
Which entered it and grew there, and now
comes forth again
In the form of rhyme and rhythm, in the
semblance of a song
That I pray may reach some hopeless ones
and help the world along;
That may give some frail one courage when
the golden gate unbars;
That may help some stumbling sinner on his
journey to the stars.

When the road is rough and hilly, and the
days are black as night;
When in your secret heart you know you
have not chosen right;
When the burden seems too heavy, and it's
far away to town;

When coward Conscience hits you, and hits
you when you're down;
When friends pass by unsmilingly, and ene-
mies revile;
When you and she have parted, with no
friend to reconcile;
When, at last, you know too surely that
you've left some things undone,
And done some things that were not right;
have lost instead of won;
When you're longing, but so fearfully, for a
home that's roofed with sod;
In a word, when like my little boy you're
" gettin' afraid of God ";
Remember that He knows it all. He's heard
it o'er and o'er.
He knows in all His wisdom that you never
lived before.
He's been forgiving sinners since the days of
Eve and Cain,

And in His mighty mercy He will forgive again.

He's been watching o'er this cradle world since the first flower grew wild,

Like a weary, patient father o'er his sick and dying child.

So, when with hesitating feet you join the trembling line

Of battered human wretches who are facing the Divine;

And when it comes your turn to plead before the highest court,

Remember that His mercy is your best and last resort.

And while you may not raise your head, just plead with confidence

That time-worn plea, "Your Honor, it was my first offense."

Boy Lost.

"BOY lost!"—these are the words I cry—
Lost unto me forever.
Nothing left now but to struggle and die,
To mourn till the soul cords sever.

"Boy lost!"—one with an innocent heart
And a soul as white as a lily;
And my man's heart bears a poisoned dart,
And the winds mourn for me shrilly.

"Boy lost!" Yes, and I was the boy.
Man must I be hereafter,
With strength to make worrying work my toy
And to greet defeat with laughter.

"Boy lost!" Yes, and that boy was I,
And down in my heart I'm fain
To kneel and ask the Father on high
To make me a boy again.

Too Late.

O TIME, turn back a single page,
And let me blot a word —
A single word that death nor age
Can ever make unheard.

Give me the chance of yesterday
To choose the path aright;
Nor leave me in the sunken way
To grope throughout the night.

I did not think. I did not know.
I did not guess the truth.
My sin was but the old one — lo!
The ignorance of youth.

Prayer or Curse.

WHAT did he mean when he called on God
As he fell on the sod?
Was it the prayer of a rider rough,
Sometime cowboy, oftener tough,
Brought from the sands of a Western plain
Because he was used to the thing called "pain,"
And was not afraid to be marked down "slain"?
What did he mean?

Was it a curse — that soldier's oath?
Nay, to believe it, God will be loth.

In the Lists.

LOVE rode into the lists with a smile,
And the air of triumph he always wore,
Though he had journeyed full many a mile;
For that day he would be king, he swore.

Hate he slew with a single stroke,
Pain as readily bit the dust,
Envy flew with his sword thrice broke,
Wrong gave way as he always must.

Sir Lie fled writhing with mortal pain,
Scandal, the scoundrel, coward-like fled;
While Fear with a glance at the row of slain
Fell back in his saddle dead.

Then entered the lists a knight in gray,
And the name on his shield was
"Doubt";
While Love gave a look of blank dismay
And was utterly put to rout.

Illusions.

STRAIGHT in the footsteps of our sires
We walk the path of life.
We light again their death cold fires,
And fight their olden strife.

We think we live a life our own,
And glory in the thought;
Though we are but the changeless stone
That God, the Sculptor, wrought.

We are but echoes of a dream;
Mere shadows of the past.
All things are we but what we seem:
Mere dreams — and not the last.

Blue Days and Bright.

ALAS for the days when we think men
false —
All of the men, yes, all —
When the mind grows blank and the tired
heart halts
At that story of man, the Fall;
When life seems death or worse than death,
And love has the life of a single breath
And flees at the first man's call!

But oh for the days when we think men true—
All of the men, yes, all —
When we think of the work that all men do,
And forget that tale of the Fall;
When life seems worth the striving to live,
And love seems worth the return we give
And flees at no man's call!

The Book of the World.

I NEED no volume of verses
Where music and dreams combine.
I know where the better and worse is,
The Book of the World is mine.

There's grandeur up on the mountain,
There's love in the flowery vale,
Romance by the moonlit fountain,
And mirth by the swelling sail.

There's peace in that humble cottage
Where a mother sings to her child,
Where the grandfather nods in his dotage
And the breadwinner's smile is mild.

There's tragedy, there in that mansion,
Where knowledge came just too late;
And coming, grew by expansion
To suspicion, and then to hate.

I need no volume of verses,
Nor draught of Pierian wine.
I hear the laughter and curses,
The Book of the World is mine.

The Rose and the Woman.

POOR little rose, how sweet! how sweet!
Poor little rose of the city street.
Sold unto woman or child or man.
Tell what your fate will be, who can?
Something that's wrong or something that's meet.
Which will it be, little rose so sweet?

Poor little rose, how weak, how weak!
Rose of the hill, so bleak! so bleak!
Blown by the wind till you lie flat,
And crushed by the heel of man at that.
Like to your sister, with like-hued cheek—
Poor little rose so weak, so weak!

Poor little woman and poor little rose!
Why was the likeness made so? God knows.
But hail ye from city or hail ye from town,
Dress ye in satin or calico gown,
Your fate is the same and equally meet.
Poor little woman so weak and sweet!

Dreams.

THERE are dreams too false and dreams too true,
Dreams that are fraught with a fond delight,
But my tenderest dreams are my dreams of you.

There are dreams of sleep and day dreams, too,
Dreams both of light and eternal night.
There are dreams too false and dreams too true.

My whole sad life is a dreamland blue
With the warm mists of a mountain height.
But my tenderest dreams are my dreams of you.

There are dreams of love — when I would
woo,
Dreams that my pen can no more indite.
There are dreams too false and dreams too
true.

I'm a dreamer of things that I wish to do,
Not for myself, but for you, my sprite;
But my tenderest dreams are my dreams of
you.

It is all my life your heart to woo.
Tell me, my sweet, am I dreaming right?
There are dreams so false and dreams so true.
May my tenderest dreams still be of you?

Two Fancies.

THIS is the fancy that came last night,
That came when the moon rose over the hill
And we two stood in its silvery light
By the broken wheel of the mill.

This is the fancy — that long ago
When the old dead moon was a thing of life —
A younger world, as the wise men know —
That we were moon man and wife.

For the thought had come, and is with me yet,
That we were not strangers that sweet first time
When eager and shy our young eyes met,
And love rang its silent chime.

And this is the fancy that cheers my heart
When it feels despair — though die we must —
That our souls will never be far apart
Though our bodies turn wind-blown dust.

And that far away in the realms of space,
In worlds that are better by far than this,
Again and again I shall seek your face
And win your first maiden kiss.

Where are You?

SOMEWHERE out on the cold, gray sphere
There is waiting a girl called "you,"
Waiting for me in hope and fear
And wondering what I'll do.

Shall I be all your fancy says?
(I'll secretly tell you "yes.")
Shall I be rich with steady ways?
I'll leave you all that to guess.

Shall I be straight and young and tall,
And handsome, brave, and strong?
Shall I be to you all in all?
To tell you would be wrong.

All I can say is, here am I,
And wait for you, all I can do.
I know where I am under the sky,
But where in the world are you?

In Starlight.

OFT when the night is white,
White with the shimmer of stars,
I see a face,
In a far off place,
Where the golden gate unbars.

There are tears in her watching eyes,
Though the angel chorus rings
In her heedless ears,
And the two sad tears
Tell why she never sings.

But I know that the maid my mate,
Who never nested with me,
Still waits and will wait
By the golden gate,
Till the time of my coming shall be.

Rose and Pink.

AH! but to love is to live.
When love is dead we die.
Heart for heart we give
And take them back with a sigh.

Perfume of pink and rose were we,
Melted by morning sun;
And we journeyed forth by land and sea
And told the world we were one.

Ah! but to part is death.
Different paths we tread.
We were a rose-pink breath,
But the perfume of each has fled.

Engaged.

INTO the harbor of my heart
She hurried from the storm;
And from it she will ne'er depart.
I hold her close and warm.

My sturdy arms encircle her
And furled are all her sails.
From me she never more will stir
To dare life's wintry gales.

She cast her anchor, free of will.
Into my breast it stole,
To hold her hard and fast until
She sinks into my soul.

May and December.

THE ivied wall, the ivied wall,
Is a cataract green and gray —
Rock with an ivy waterfall
Throwing out grass green spray.

The rain that gives to one its life
Will crumble the other away.
The golden rain feeds the fair young wife,
But murders the husband gray.

To Thisbe.

AFLOAT — afloat!
Her soul my boat
And thought the sea I'm sailing;
Her love the gale,
Her eyes my sail
No weary fancy trailing.

I find delights,
Such joys, such sights,
That all the world is laughter.
We spurn the gods,
Their frowns, their nods,
Now and the ages after.

The Rarest Gem.

THE young red rose it laughs at me
For jealousy of her ;
The saucy squirrel chaffs at me
From the branches of the fir.

The brook reflects her dainty face
And boasts it's fair as she,
As it runs its everlasting race
From the mountain to the sea.

You are, oh foolish brook and rose,
In nature's diadem,
But you're the setting — she, God knows,
Is the rare, the radiant gem.

The Pebbles.

REST we here in the dark green grasses;
A bed of my arms for thee I'll make;
And up above, where the white cloud passes,
The depths you shall see of a great blue lake.

The white clouds there are swans, my dearest;
Snow white swans on a lake of blue,
As white as the very love thou fearest;
Thy soul is the same pure white in hue.

And down, down, down, where the blue lake's deepest,
See the pebbles that keep it pure,
The gold star pebbles, the deepest, steepest;
The gold star pebbles that aye endure.

The Falling Star.

A SWIFT flash in the evening sky,
Above the elm where doves are calling;
A fiery streak, with flaming eye,
A star, another star is falling!

God put her with her sisters there,
She would not stop, she would not stay.
The God-forbidden she would dare,
And daring cast her soul away.

A molten drop is she in hell,
But up above, still bright, secure,
Her myriad sisters ever dwell
To light man's pathway to the pure.

In the Night.

THE day belongs to all mankind
To fight, to strive and struggle in.
For they are mad and they are blind
To all night's attributes, save sin.

But in the night I see far more
Than all the day can show to me.
I see the folk of fairy lore,
The sprites of air and land and sea.

And when the wind is whispering
Its secrets to the bending trees,
I hear the tales of love that Spring
Has spread o'er all the lands and seas.

I see such sights, I hear such things,
That never more I crave the light.
I hear the fluttering of wings
And wish it were eternal night.

Nature's Babe.

WHEN Mother Nature bore the world
She clasped it to her breast ;
She bathed it where a brooklet purled,
Then in white clouds 'twas dressed.

Again she clasped it to her breast,
Sang to it soothingly,
And whispered: "I love you the best ;
You're all the world to me !"

If.

IF 'twere only real warm in December
And the snow would but fall in July,
There would then be a year to remember
Till the dark dreary day that we die.

If fuel were plenty as water,
And gas quite as free as the air,
We could live our life more as we oughter,
Without half the temptation to swear.

A Motion Withdrawn.

WHAT is this we read
Of "One horse power"?
Out upon the screed!
'Tis not the horse's hour.

Brains are now the thing,
Neither cringe nor cower,
A better unit bring,—
'Tis "One man's power."

Ah, your point is made,
And let's have no dissension.
Most men, I am afraid,
Run a donkey engine.

Practical.

THERE was a man made a fortune in steel.
Sensible man! Sensible man!
Another one, he made a fortune in "steal."
Reprehensible man! Reprehensible man!

Steel is so strong,
To steal is so wrong.
Which man would you rather be — granting you can?

This question I asked of my Sunday-school class,
Eleven dull boys and a bright little lass.
The boys were as dumb as an old cedar post,
The girl asked me quietly, "Which made the most?"

The "New" Poet.

HERE'S a bay for the bard of the
"dinky dink" style,
The man who turns poetry out by the mile;
Who makes his own words and who makes
his own rhyme,
And mingles them up in a jingle sublime.
Ah me! I would think this world brimming
with bliss,
If I could sell poetry written like this:

There was a squat man in the land of Pee
Wee
Who went out to walk with a Ting-a-Ling
Tee.
They walked with a biff and a buff and a
bang,

While "Rig-a-jig-jigget," the Ting-a-Ling
sang.
The chorus of which, as you know, I dare
say,
Is "Timothy-wimothy-bimothy hay."

Now that is the jingle and that is the sense.
It's not very deep and it's not very dense.
To write it by furlongs is not very hard;
But to sell it requireth a mercantile bard;
A good man of business affairs and all that.
Whenever I meet him I take off my hat.

May Day.

THE first of May
Is moving day
Through all the mighty city.
It's fret and frown
O'er all the town.
It moves my heart with pity.

The man of muscle
Is a-hustle
From early morn till night.
I hear him swear
Upon the stair.
I fear he's getting tight.

The baby howls,
The bulldog growls,
The housewife's full of fears.
'Tis moving day
Again I say.
It moves my soul to tears.

Pugilistic Punch.

BY way of legal praecipe,
I here announce a recipe
For Pugilistic Punch — quite plain —
Take one full case of good champagne.
A quart or two of prime old brandy
Now add to this, if it is handy.
Then, though the mixture's getting risky,
Put in a gallon jug of whisky.
Add sugar, bought from Sugar Trust,
And spices powdered into dust.
Now add some absinthe, as you ponder,
For "absinthe makes the heart grow fonder."
Now turn the helm up hard to port,
Then dash with bitters — any sort.

Drink hearty, for no care will vex us
When this has reached our solar plexus.

To a Thermometer.

WE watch your dull, insipid face,
You heartless, soulless, brainless lout,
And, as you say, remain in place
Or dare to venture out.

We put you in a shady nook
And watch you with a ceaseless care.
We note your movements in a book —
And at some of them swear.

We order ice when you arise,
We order coal when you go down;
And so you run the enterprise
Of quite one half the town.

We'd never know that it was hot
Unless you grimly told us so.
We'd never know how cold it got
Did you not fall so low.

By Jove! 'Twould rid us of one care
If we'd forego your mad revealings,
And cast you in the rubbish there
And trust entirely to our feelings.

The Wineless Dinner.

HERE'S to the wineless dinner!
Drink it in water clear,
Never a quaff for a sinner
Of sherry, champagne, or beer.

Here's to the latest function,
The last, most ultimate fad!
Swallow your "polly" with unction,
Society's gone to the bad —

Gone with the lilt of laughter
That followed the draft of wine.
No longer we're chasing after
An invitation to dine.

Wishes.

A LITTLE dog I wish I were,
For then I know she'd hug me,
And like unto her own real cur
Around the town she'd lug me.

I wish I were a kitten, too,
For then she would caress me;
And press me to her bosom, you
Have seen how she would bless me.

I wish I were the Blarney Stone
For then I know she'd kiss me.
Our chappies would be less by one,
But not a soul would miss me.

Drifting.

WRITTEN IN THE WILDS OF OHIO.

MY soul to-day
Is far away
And strutting up and down Broadway.
I join the crowd,
And laugh aloud
To jostle with the rich and proud.

My senses greet
The smell so sweet
Of something mighty good to eat.
And now I think
I'm on the brink
Of ordering something good to drink.

At close of day
I seek the play
And loll back in the great parquet.
Anon at Brown's
How soon care drowns,
While toasting Gotham — Queen of towns!

The Sailor's Choice.

BLOW me madly, breath of the gale.
Still will my laughter mock.
Blow away rigging and masts and sail
And dash me up on the rock.

Tear me apart in your fiendish glee,
Do all this if you will,—
But leave me not on the stagnant sea
Where none can use his will.

The north wind bears no odor of palm,
But a scent of the salt instead.
So a curse on the balm, and a curse on the calm,
Of the sea of the living dead!

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